

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 13, 2017 – 6:30 pm

Upstairs Meeting Room, Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Alex Peterkin, Addie Rose Holland, Justin Fermann, Sean Werle and Donna Francis

Commissioners Absent: Deb Henson

Staff: Walter Ramsey – Conservation Agent

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of March 9, 2017 Minutes: *Motion* made by Justin Fermann to approve the March 9, 2017. *Seconded* by Alex Peterkin. **Motion passed.** Sean Werle abstained

Jaime Pottern, Mt Grace Land Conservation Trust

Execute closing documents for Conservation Restriction to be co-held by the Montague Conservation Commission and Mount Grace Land Trust for 53.94 acres at 73 Mormon Hollow Road (Grantor: Denton J. Smith II and Marsha J. Smith).

This item was tabled to the next meeting because the paperwork was not finalized.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Workshop

Guest: Alyssa LaRose – Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Inventory of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest, Analysis of Needs

Alyssa has revised the Geology section with the information gathered through Addie Rose Holland's contact at the University of Massachusetts. At the Commission's request Alyssa prepared a table for all the unprotected utility land (table 5-10).

Route 63 Corridor-

Donna Francis asked *has there been any discussion on doing an overpass/underpass in and around the Rte. 63 corridor for open space.* Walter R. responded that no there has not been any discussion but if the railroad, town or state was replacing a culvert or doing some changes in that corridor the Open Space Plan could be used to justify improving a culvert for habitat.

Trails-

There was general support for improving trailheads in town and for identifying a trail to connect the Montague Plains and the Dry Hill Conservation area. Walter will explore improved parking signage at Dry Hill trailhead. Justin F observed that there is a running trail around the lake that could be built into a trail system in the future along with a discussion regarding State land in Montague in and around the Montague State Forest and Montague Wildlife Management areas regarding the lack of a trail system and marked trailheads (only one trailhead on Chestnut Street).

Addie R. commented that there is a trailhead near Spaulding Brook for the Robert Frost trail that runs to the Pig Pen with parking available at the top of Spaulding Brook Rd. This location is not well marked and should be a high priority to be marked for accessibility and parking. A question was raised as to who maintains the Robert Frost Trail.

Agent Updates:

Forest Cutting Plans:

- Semanski-186 Turners Falls Road. The Commission was notified by DCR about unauthorized cutting in riverfront area at this location. DCR issued stop work order. Agent and chair visited site. Cutting was stopped and site had already been ordered to be cleaned. DCR and NHESP already have enforcement actions in place. Agent will continue to monitor developments. No action.
- Mass Division of Fisheries & Wildlife for property located on the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area. No jurisdiction resource areas in the proposed cutting location. No action.

8:04ADJOURN Motion made by Donna Francis to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Alex Peterkin.
Motion passed unanimously.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____